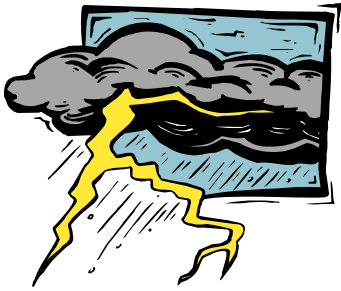


Security Quickie 2-12-03: NIPC - Heightened Awareness



Because we live in the Great Plains we have become accustomed to all sorts of weather: floods, blizzards, squalls, drought, tornadoes, and even the occasional perfect day. As Iowa has become more and more electronically connected, we must now also occasionally deal with bad weather in the cyber environment, too. Due to the possible conflict between the United States and Iraq, we may be facing such a time in the near future.

The National Infrastructure Protection Center (NIPC) on Feb. 11, 2003 issued a Heightened Cyber Security Advisory (Advisory 03-002) due to the increased tensions and possibility of war between the U.S. and Iraq. You can view the full text here: <http://www.nipc.gov/warnings/advisories/2003/03-002.htm>

In essence, the NIPC strongly encourages the following:

- Increased user awareness of the potential for cyber events
- Keep security postures up-to-date with current anti-virus and filtering techniques
- Ensure that response and recovery procedures are in place

Cyber events might include web defacements, increased spamming, increased use of worms or viruses, patriotic or anti-American hacking, criminal activity, and other activities. The spread of malicious code through patriotic-looking e-mail messages, screen-savers, and slideshows (something that occurred after the Sept. 11th tragedy) is another example of things to watch out for. If we all follow our established security and acceptable use policies, and use our common sense, it is likely that any 'cyber-storm' that comes over the horizon will only get us a little wet, instead of washing us down the river.

If you do notice suspicious activity, please report it to the Information Security Office via the Security Alert account: SecurityAlert@iowa.gov